



Environment Committee Minutes

18th July 2023
Microsoft Teams Call

Attendees

Bruce Penson (Chair), Tracey Haskins, Jeremy Yates, Chris Lacey

Apologies and absent

Lara Beattie, Pru Shackley, Martin Horswood, Sarah Brown, Dave Peet, Salvatore Diliberto, Cllr Peter Graves

Item	Topic	Action
1	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting: Minutes from the meeting 6th June 2023 were approved.</p>	
2	<p>Council update</p> <p>Consultation of WBC climate documents now complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net Zero Woking Community Forum • Wildlife Gardening Guide Woking Community Forum <p>These will hopefully both be adopted and published online.</p> <p>Woking Borough Council's financial position was noted (details available here). Staff consultations begin this month as a part of the Council moving towards being a smaller organisation in the future, focused on core services. We will have to wait until the process is complete before learning more.</p>	
3	<p>WEAct update: WEAct were not present for this meeting.</p>	
4	<p>Events: WEAct held a special general meeting last Thursday to approve a new constitution as they move to becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation – more can be read here.</p>	

5	<p>Resources for website</p> <p>We should add the WBC Climate change strategy and Wildlife gardening guide documents once adopted.</p> <p>BP mentioned the Chamber's website is currently being reviewed and as such resources will likely not be posted until the review of its usage is complete.</p>	
6	<p>AOB</p> <p>JY mentioned that Woodhaven have some PPE spare and enquired whether it is of use to the council. They are being offered for free so don't get wasted. Several thousand masks in boxes of 50. Type 2R standard masks. Tracey will check.</p> <p>CL mentioned the WBC consultation on discretionary spending, suggested committee and chamber members should take some time to review and may wish to respond in favour of environment spending.</p> <p>CL asked whether there is any further advice on cleaning and maintenance of solar panels. TH referred to email summarising conversation with colleagues at ThamesWey which is bulleted below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ThamesWey have PV infrastructure in a similar position, having been installing these over the last twenty plus years. • The manufactured form of PV units has developed over the years, complicating their replacement. For example, the standard fittings have changed over time. • Newer units are more efficient than the old, however the old units still work – a balanced decision is needed in terms of cost/benefits. • The life spans of PV units will vary, they usually generate for 20-25 years, but it can also be hard to predict what other contextual changes may have implications for PV use e.g. changing fire regulations. • Trade organisations of solar manufacturers provide some online advice – a brief web search highlighted this organisation for example Solar Energy UK, which features some useful context e.g. All about solar • Action Surrey's PV advice for homeowners is available on their new website, see Solar Photovoltaic Electricity - Action Surrey They also have a Help for Businesses page. • Rooftop PV could be of interest to businesses owning a suitable building, in particular if your operations are high energy use. 	TH to come back to JY

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business case for PV needs to take into account future replacement costs and any feed in tariff available. • The Government has recently established a Solar Taskforce. • A recent BBC article on the challenges of recycling PV: Challenge to stop solar panels becoming a 'waste mountain'. <p>CL – noted that the debate on whether we should still be moving to EVs, waiting or sticking with old vehicles is becoming quite high profile</p> <p>BP – asked Tracey whether WBC will continue to invest in EV charging infrastructure. Tracey said the Council’s investment programme is currently paused and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future but it is continuing to maintain essential infrastructure.</p> <p>TH mentioned an interesting link courtesy of recent Guilford Environment Forum newsletter which committee members might wish to view: The Big Green Money Show - Birds, Bees and Business - Why Nature Matters (With The Wildlife Trusts and Landsec) - BBC Sounds</p> <p>CL has installed a swift box with a speaker and has noticed interest from swifts and swallows. Still a window of two weeks to one month to install a swift box as swifts are currently scouting for nests for next season. Chris’ firm installs these as standard for new developments.</p>	
	<p>Dates for next Environmental committee meetings</p> <p>Next meeting was originally schedule for 29th August 2023 – Bruce away and suspects others will be too due to bank holiday to it will be put back by one week.</p> <p>Next dates:</p> <p>5th September 2023 @ 12.30 pm 17th October 2023 @ 12.30 pm</p>	